



Dear Parents,

Our next unit in social studies is 'Our Earth'. This unit reviews the communities we belong to from our first unit (planet, continent, country, state, town, street). There is a concentrated focus on the continents and the oceans. During the unit we are able to practice map skills using cardinal directions on a compass rose. Finally, we identify different land and water forms on our Earth.

The learning goals of the unit are as follows:

- *Students will know the difference between a globe and a map.
- *Students will be able to follow directions on a map.
- *Students will be able to name the seven continents, the four oceans and identify them on a map.
- *Students will compare land and water forms.

The vocabulary your child is expected to know is:

Essential-globe, map, continents (name all seven), ocean (name all four), symbol, compass rose, cardinal directions, map key

Important-landforms, mountains, hills, plain, island, lake, river, ocean

Helpful to know-boundary, peninsula, mesa, plateau, canyon, streams, ponds, valley

One part of the unit is for students to start becoming familiar with the names of countries, states, lakes, etc. This is the first exposure of many of these. It is not uncommon for them to call Canada a state or Florida a country. To help with this, each student will be doing a small research project on a state. The more exposure they have to the names, the easier it will be for them to decipher them in the future. I have added links to www.portaportal.com (go in as guest and type hpfeiffer) to help your child explore these areas in more depth.

As in previous units, it would be very helpful if you could include these concepts and words in your conversations with your child to help reinforce what they are learning in school. I love hearing about the conversations and experiments you are having with your child at home revolving around what we are studying in school.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Pfeiffer